

# Youth & Parent Peer Support:

*What it takes when working with the same family*



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# Background

FY 2023 brought an opportunity for the Family-Run Executive Director Leadership Association (FREDLA) to work in partnership with the Youth Move National Peer Center. One of the tasks included facilitating discussions with dyads of Youth and Parent Peer Support providers to learn about their experiences when working with the same families.

Our previous work has taught us that this emerging area in peer support often finds providers each supporting others who are at odds with one another – in an environment that is filled with emotion, perceptions, and hopes and dreams. Building a collaborative relationship between the PPSP and YPSP requires work. When they see themselves as a team, supporting the family as a whole but with individual roles and perspectives, success is at hand.

These conversations yielded four key themes: ***challenges, collaboration, problem solving, and tools and resources*** that support their work together. The following page contains examples and strategies from these conversations and our previous work with Youth MOVE National in these areas.

***Thank you*** to the YPS and PPS providers who participated in these discussions  
and to those of you who do this work every day!

- Youth Peer Support & Parent Peer Support: *Experiences when working with the same family*

### ***Challenges when YPS & PPS work with the same family***

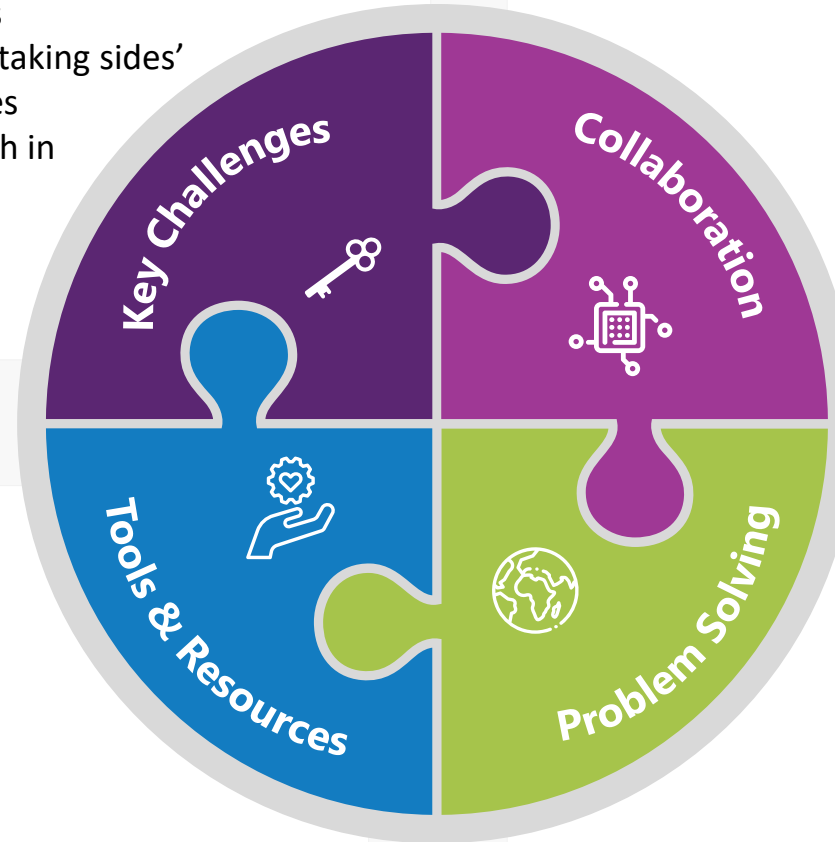
- Helping youth & families feel heard by one another
- Building trust to move toward shared goals
- Managing perceptions that YPS & PPS are 'taking sides'
- Navigating conflict and resolving differences
- Helping families have skills to support youth in gaining independence
- Understanding how youth and family reactions impact one another

### ***Modelling collaboration when youth & parent priorities differ***

- Establishing a safe place for communication
- Being open minded & practicing negotiation
- Knowing how to reframe and validate strengths & needs
- Being able to calculate risk & learn from mistakes
- Making time for hard conversations
- Practicing decision making

### ***Tools and resources for collaboration among Youth & Parent Support Partners***

- Clinical supervision
- Fair fighting tools
- Leadership style inventory
- Mental Health First Aid
- Motivational Interviewing
- Team based planning
- Telling your own story effectively



### ***Strategies for problem solving when youth & family priorities differ***

- Encouraging self-advocacy
- Finding common ground
- Practicing and modeling being non-judgmental
- Trying not to personalize the conflict
- Engaging in pre-planning with your colleague
- Sharing our story to build trust and rapport

## Strategies suggested to support collaborative relationships among YSP & PSP

- ***Establish clarity in responsibilities and required tasks*** - Be clear about who is responsible for what components of program implementation, which pieces of documentation, deadlines for each to meet, etc.
- ***Co-training in joint competencies*** - communication skills, procedures and protocols for working within the same home at the same time, etc.
- ***Develop and implement processes*** that promote collaboration in the different aspects of working with a family (strengths discovery, planning to reach goals, etc.) in both programs and within the agency.
- ***Incorporate opportunities for joint supervision*** on family-related issues, as well as opportunities to problem-solve together at both the individual family and program levels. It is important that the supervisors of the two also collaborate and hold joint supervision to discuss unified approaches to case-specific issues.
- ***Training on both parent and youth/young adult perspectives***, culture and relationship evolution
- ***Equip PPSPs and YPSPs with tools to use in managing conflict*** between youth and their parents, as well as conflict resolution training and protocols for the peer support providers.
- ***Ensure that there is fairness in access*** – offer both types of peer support to families, so all youth and families have opportunities to choose what works for them



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